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Letter dated 5 December 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 4 December 1997, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Letter dated 4 December 1997 from Mr. Aytuğ Plümer addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letters dated 12 and 20 November 1997 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations, which contain allegations aimed at providing a smokescreen for the Greek Cypriot administration's ongoing policy of escalation and tension in the island (A/52/684-S/1997/897 and A/52/692-S/1997/915, respectively).

At the outset, I wish to remind the Greek Cypriot representative who depicts the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus as an "illegal entity" or "occupied areas" that the only occupation in Cyprus is the 34-year-old usurpation and continued occupation by the Greek Cypriot side of the seat of government of the bi-communal Republic of Cyprus established under international treaties in 1960. Thus, the usurper Greek Cypriot administration or its representatives have no right to question the legality of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, as an independent State, which was established through the free and democratic will of the Turkish Cypriot people.

In the aforementioned letter of 20 November, the Greek Cypriot representative cites the visit to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus of His Excellency Mr. Bülent Ecevit, Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey, accompanied by His Excellency Mr. İsmail Cem, Turkish Foreign Minister, and other high-level officials, which took place at the invitation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus on the occasion of the 15 November celebrations marking the fourteenth anniversary of the declaration of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. I wish to stress that the relations between Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are deeply rooted in a common history, culture and kinship and are based on mutual recognition between two independent States. Turkey, as the motherland of the Turkish Cypriots, and as one of the Guarantor Powers of the 1960 partnership republic, has provided effective security guarantees for the Turkish Cypriot people in the face of the long-standing campaign of the Greek-Greek Cypriot camp to realize the union of Cyprus with Greece (Enosis). This armed campaign culminated in the bloody attempt in 1974 at the final takeover of Cyprus by Greece, through a coup d'état organized by the junta in Athens and its collaborators in Cyprus.

Turkey had to intervene on 20 July 1974, in the face of the coup d'état to realize Enosis, in order to protect the Turkish Cypriot people, who had been subjected to a severe campaign of ethnic cleansing in the preceding 11 years, and faced imminent threat of extermination at the hands of the invading Greek army and its proxies in Cyprus (see Archbishop Makarios' statement openly accusing Greece of invading Cyprus, contained in the verbatim record of the 1780th meeting of the Security Council (S/PV.1780 of 19 July 1974). Turkey's timely and legitimate intervention, undertaken in accordance with the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee, laid the foundation for a just and durable settlement of the Cyprus question on a bi-zonal basis.

Deputy Prime Minister Ecevit's visit to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus with other high-level Turkish officials on the occasion of the anniversary of the establishment of the Republic, in the context of the special relations that exist between the two countries, demonstrates Turkey's continuing commitment to the security and well-being of the Turkish Cypriot people. At the same time, Turkey's presence in northern Cyprus as a Guarantor Power is an indispensable element for a peaceful solution, evidenced by the fact that the Turkish peace forces have effectively preserved peace and stability in the island in the last 23 years. The Greek Cypriot side's protestations over the visit, therefore, are totally unwarranted and emanate from its unfounded claim to be the sole sovereign authority over the whole island and the desire to totally isolate the Turkish Cypriot people, which is the real provocation and an impediment to a peaceful solution.

As regards the baseless charges concerning "airspace violations", I would like to recall that previous similar allegations were rejected in toto in our successive communications addressed to you, most recently in the letter dated 19 November 1997 (A/52/694-S/1997/918). In this regard, I wish to reiterate briefly that flights within the airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full knowledge and consent of the appropriate authorities of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, over which the usurper Greek Cypriot regime in the south has no jurisdiction or right of say whatsoever. The same principle applies also in the case of visits to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus by vessels belonging to the Turkish navy.

The repeated allegations made by the Greek Cypriot administration demonstrate that it is not prepared to acknowledge the present reality of the existence of two separate administrations which will constitute the framework of a bi-zonal settlement based on the sovereign equality of the two sides in Cyprus. Instead, the Greek Cypriot administration has opted for a reckless policy of escalation and tension on the island through an unprecedented build-up of arms and armed forces within the context of the so-called "joint defence doctrine" with Greece. It should be noted that the Greek Cypriot administration, which is proceeding with the deployment of the S-300 missile system, in spite of successive Security Council resolutions counselling against the introduction of sophisticated weaponry to the island to prevent further escalation, also intends to purchase and deploy the Russian-made sophisticated Pantsyr-Si anti-aircraft missile system (Greek Cypriot daily Mahi of 30 November 1997). Furthermore, reports have appeared in the Greek Cypriot press of 1 and 2 December 1997 concerning disclosures made by the Greek Cypriot leader, Mr. Clerides, to the effect that 50 Greek tanks manned by personnel from Greece have been added to the Greek Cypriot arsenal and that the Greek contingent in South Cyprus has been modernized and converted into a highly mechanized one.

For some time now we have been conveying to you the views and concerns of the Turkish Cypriot side over the implementation of the so-called "joint defence doctrine" between the Greek Cypriot administration and Greece and the Greek Cypriot side's illegal and unilateral bid to secure full European Union (EU) membership in the name of "Cyprus". The following remarks made by Mr. Clerides during a speech at Mammari village in south Cyprus on 24 November 1997 sheds light on the true political and military objectives of the Greek Cypriot side:

"I believe we are on the right course. We have strengthened our military capability and with the implementation of the joint defence doctrine we have brought Greece back to the island. The EU perspective also gives us new opportunities to further our national cause." (Greek Cypriot daily Tharos of 25 November 1997)

One should recall that when Greek Cypriot leaders refer to the "national cause" they are referring to the political testament of the late Archbishop Makarios who publicly stated that by having a purely Greek Cypriot administration recognized as the "Republic of Cyprus" he had brought Cyprus to the "nearest point to Enosis (union of Cyprus with Greece)".

In view of the above, all parties interested in a peaceful solution of the Cyprus question should impress upon the Greek Cypriot side that the reckless policy of escalation and tension it is pursuing does not serve the cause of peace in the island, and that it should instead concentrate its efforts to the finding of a comprehensive settlement based on the sovereign equality of the two sides.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLÜMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus